

# The Gravel Laker

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Spring, 2014



Chase Stogis, Gebhard Beach

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## President's Corner

Gravel Lakers,

It looks like our very hard winter is over! Although we had record snowfall in Southwest Michigan, there are a couple of advantages to a strong winter. For one, consistent, thick ice cover is great for dampening Eurasian Watermilfoil. This invader species that we actively control is stronger than most in its ability to survive the winter. My hope is that it will be sparser this year. Second, all the snow should help lake levels. Already the water is up. Higher lake levels give you more water to play in and reduce the acreage where problematic aquatic species can grow. (The deeper the water, the less sunlight that will penetrate).

Do you have questions, comments or concerns? Please contact us via email at [cucad4@hotmail.com](mailto:cucad4@hotmail.com), or visit us on our website at [www.gravellake.org](http://www.gravellake.org). Also, be sure to join our Facebook page, where we post important information year-round. You can always speak directly to your beach trustee, too. See the last page of this newsletter for the list of trustees.

See you at the lake!

Craig

## Important Dates

<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
Monday, 5/26		Memorial Day
Saturday, 6/21	11:00AM	Membership Meeting @ Craig and Melissa DeSimone's house (32313 Chamberlin Dr.)
Saturday, 6/21	12:00PM	Gravel Lake Picnic (immediately following membership meeting)
Friday, 7/4		Fourth of July
Friday, 7/4-7/5		GLA Fourth of July events
Friday, 7/4	10:00PM	Boat Parade (registration at 9:30PM) Venetian Night: "Venetian Night is a lighted boat parade. Light up and decorate your boat; prizes for the best decorated
Saturday, 7/5	9:30AM	Fun Run (registration at 9:00AM) @ Willow Beach Resort
Saturday, 7/5	12:00PM	Kids Games @ Willow Beach Resort
Saturday, 7/5	5:00PM	Paddle Boat Regatta @ the channel (registration at 4:45)
Saturday, 7/19	10:00AM	Board of Trustees Meeting @ Porter Township Hall
Saturday, 8/16	10:00AM	Membership Meeting @ Raab's pole barn on Gebhard
Saturday, 8/16	TBD	Gravle Lake Social (tentative)
Monday, 9/1		Labor Day
Friday, 9/5-9/7		Paw Paw Wine & Harvest Festival
Saturday, 9/20	10:00AM	Board of Trustees Meeting @ Porter Township Hall
Saturday, 10/18	10:00AM	Board of Trustees Meeting @ Porter Township Hall

## Gravel Lake Association 2014 Calendar

### BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

- **Saturday, June 21st at 11AM – Membership Meeting**
  - Location -- Craig & Melissa DeSimone's house, 32313 Chamberlin Drive
  - Trustee elections
  - Dues collection
  - 50-50 raffle
  - Buy Gravel Lake paraphernalia – shirts, coozies, towels, etc.
- Saturday, July 19th Board of Trustees meeting at 10AM (Porter Township Hall)
- **Saturday, August 16th at 10AM – Membership Meeting**
  - Location – Raab's pole barn on Gebhard Beach
  - Officer elections
  - 50-50 raffle
  - Buy Gravel Lake paraphernalia
- Saturday, September 20 Board of Trustees meeting at 10AM (Porter Township Hall)

### FOURTH OF JULY ACTIVITIES: Friday 7/4-Saturday 7/5

- Boat Parade – Friday, July 4th at 10:00PM
  - Theme: Venetian Night
  - Venetian Night is a lighted boat parade. Light up and decorate your boat.
  - **Register at 9:30PM at the south side of the weed bed**
  - **Parade begins at 10PM**
  - Prizes for best decorated
- Fun Run – Saturday, July 5th at 9:30AM – Willow Beach Resort
  - Registration begins at 9:00AM
  - 2 mile race
  - FREE for all participants
  - All ages welcome!
  - Prizes and refreshments
- Kids Games – Saturday, July 5th at 12PM – Willow Beach Resort
  - Ages 1-12
  - Prizes for all participants
- Paddle Boat Regatta – Saturday, July 5th at 5PM
  - Location - Channel
  - Register at 4:45PM at the Public Access
  - **All participants MUST have certified flotation devices**
  - Divisions
    - 1-person kayak
    - 2-person kayak
    - Youth paddle boat (both racers under 12)
    - Adult paddle boat
    - Paddleboard

## Endangered Species of Van Buren County

For better or worse living on a lake requires you to have a relationship with the native plants and animals that thrive on, and even enjoy, the lake just like you do. We often find ourselves at odds with the natural environment - ground squirrels, “weeds” on our beaches, and insects, to name a few. Many of the things we do to make lake life more comfortable can have lasting impacts on native animals and plants. The following species are on the endangered list as either endangered, threatened, or proposed as such and live in Van Buren county:

### **Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*)**

These small brown or black bats weigh only about as much as three pennies. They spend their summer near rivers and lakes to feed on flying insects, eating half their weight each evening. They can be found roosting under the peeling bark of trees.

### **Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)**

As their name suggests these bats have longer ears than others. They are also considered medium size and have a lighter brown coloring. They spend their summer feeding on flying insects and will often collect motionless insects from the top of water and plants.

\*Both the Indiana bat and Northern long-eared bat are affected by human disruption of their habitat and White-nose syndrome (WNS). WNS is a white fungus that grows on the bat's nose and wings, ultimately leading to death. WNS has been confirmed in Michigan.

### **Rufa red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*)**

This is a bird that has a red breast with black and white feathers mixed in on the wings, with a wingspan around 20 inches. These birds have an amazing range that finds them wintering as far south as Chile and Argentina. Because they have such a large range, the Rufa red knot are extremely sensitive to overfishing and climate change.

### **Eastern massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus*)**

This is a medium-sized rattlesnake with a heart-shaped head that can grow up to 2 feet long. They are found in wetland areas and prefer to eat rodents. Still only considered a candidate for the list, this snake faces threats of eradication from fearful humans as well as habitat loss when wetlands are filled in for other uses.

### **Mitchell's satyr butterfly (*Neonympha mitchellii mitchellii*)**

This is a pretty, medium-sized butterfly that is brown with orange, black, and silver colored circles on its wings. It is restricted to very rare wetlands called fens that are characterized by carbonate-rich ground water. As we decrease wetland areas through fill and construction, these butterflies are less likely to thrive in our county.

### **Pitcher's thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*)**

This thistle grows for five to eight years before it produces its cream or pink flower. It is three feet tall and prefers the open sand areas of Lake Michigan. As we develop shoreline and increase human activity on the beaches of the Great Lakes we decrease the ability of thistles to grow.

## Endangered Species of Van Buren County (continued)

It is important to examine the things we think are necessary to improve quality of life and what they might do to the native species around us. Are poisons and sprays really necessary to control species we think of as pests? Do we need to have short perfect grass at the lake that will disrupt species of birds, snakes, and butterflies from living in our ecosystem? All species have a place and a role in a healthy lake, and in order to maintain the beauty and diversity of Gravel Lake, we need to protect the species around us.

Melissa DeSimone  
Contributing Writer

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## Gravel Lake Management Update 2014

Prior to 2004, Gravel Lake had a significant problem with the exotic plant species Eurasian watermilfoil. This species is a non-native and invasive plant which can cause significant ecological and recreational problems on lakes. With the establishment of the Weed Control Special Assessment District in 2004, management of this species has taken place over the past ten years, as well as yearly water quality testing and vegetation assessments. Initially, the lake-wide milfoil problem was addressed by performing a whole-lake Sonar A.S. treatment. This involves applying the herbicide Sonar to the lake at a very low and selective rate for Eurasian watermilfoil. Since it is a whole-lake application, all milfoil is controlled lake wide. The 2004 treatment was extremely successful and any milfoil regrowth found in later seasons was addressed by small scale, localized spot treatments. This strategy worked well for seven years. In 2012 however, we did observe a fair amount of milfoil growing in the deeper offshore waters. While not as heavy as 2003, it did trigger a change in management strategy and another whole-lake Sonar A.S. application was conducted in 2013. This treatment was again very successful and no milfoil was observed in our year-end AVAS survey.

For 2014, we anticipate that we will see very limited milfoil on Gravel Lake and will go back to a strategy of “search and destroy”. We will look at the lake several times during the year and address any milfoil through localized, spot treatments. Hopefully we can continue to manage at the lowest levels possible for as long as possible.

In addition to Eurasian watermilfoil management, PLM will also treat for the exotic macro algae species, Starry stonewort. As of yet, we have only observed this species in the channel but we will continue to monitor the main lake for any pioneering Starry stonewort infestations.

Andy Tomaszewski  
Southern Lakes Manager  
PLM Lake & Land Management Corp.

The Gravel Lake Association is in the process of renewing its contract with Professional Lake Management for another 4 years. Though we continue to review other options for weed control, we continue to resolve on herbicides as the most cost-effective method. Assessments will remain consistent. Keep in mind that we voluntarily reduced our assessment level due to the success of the program; we've been consistently under-budget for several years now. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact the Gravel Lake Association.

Craig DeSimone  
President, Gravel Lake Association



## What We Will Remember...



Paul Walter of Gebhard Beach passed away on Thursday, May 1st. He is survived by his wife, Pat, and their family. We will remember him in so many ways.

Paul was always willing to help. You pretty much didn't even have to ask: docks, boats, household stuff, and especially party set-up. He physically would help in person on boat repairs, house projects, and he'd even split wood! He was always looking out for you. He would check on my house and my family's house every season of the year. If there was a problem, Paul would let me know, and often times, he provided the solution.

Paul was so funny! Always quick with a joke and could just as easily laugh at himself as well as others. He loved a good party, even if it wasn't supposed to be a party. I've attended many of his parties and he and Pat attended many of mine, ALWAYS with food or drink in hand to share – such very gracious guests. Despite his tough exterior he was probably the kindest and most generous person. Still, Paul had his opinions and would let you know; he was strongly principled and stood up for what he believed.

He was an avid supporter of the lake association, willing to help with anything needed. He gave membership meetings a much more social and “festive” atmosphere with high-end Bloody Marys for members AND the president (who sometimes needed one by the end of the meeting!). Drinks were also provided for the Gravel Lake Fun Run, even if you were just a spectator. He would playfully spray the runners with a hose, too!

Paul was a connector; we know so many more people because he brought us all together. Paul will be very truly missed. He had an impact on so many of us with his great generosity and fun loving spirit. Here's to you, Paul – you've left your mark on Gravel Lake.

With our love and sympathy to the Walter Family,

Carole Roeder and Craig DeSimone

## Memories of Grandma



My grandmother, H. Louise Ehemann, went to join my grandpa George on October 30, 2013. I consider myself lucky because without her, my family would have missed out on so many great memories.

Not much of a sun and water person, my grandma tended to stay inside, sewing and doing other house projects. If she did venture outside, it would be to do yard work, and she would wear a huge floppy hat to shade her from the sun. She would always patch up the scrapes my cousins and siblings and I would get outside, and she would be the one to cover us with Calamine lotion when we got Swimmer's Itch or mosquito bites. One time they were so bad that she piled all five of us (my two brothers, two cousins, and me) in the bathtub for an oatmeal bath. She would be the one outside on a 95-degree day getting the charcoal grill going so we would have a nice BBQ chicken dinner with corn on the cob that night. Then she fiercely guarded it so that none of her grandchildren would accidentally run into it. She made the curtains and sofa covers at the cottage; maybe they weren't the most stylish, but she got that fabric on sale at JoAnn Fabrics on the clearance table! On the way up to the lake from

northern Illinois, she was in charge of finding the 40 cents in toll money for each of the five tolls we'd pass through to get to the lake. Then she'd let her grandkids hand the coins to my grandpa, who was driving. She would also sometimes break up backseat fights between my brothers and/or cousins. She climbed the ladder mounted on the wall in the house to sleep in the loft until she was almost 80! Grandma would make us blueberry pancakes (using handpicked blueberries from a local U-Pick) in the morning and make us drink all of our milk. Then she'd tap us on the shoulder when we were least expecting it, shout "Gotcha last!" and take off running.

Grandma may have passed away, but she is still very much alive in our hearts and memories.

Until we meet again, Grandma; thanks for the memories.

Jamie Paramski, Huff's Landing



## In Memoriam, Heinz Gutmann



I personally called him one of my dearest friends. It is likely that you called him one of your dearest friends and that friends of yours also considered him one of their dearest friends. That's because he was that kind of guy. Heinz Gutmann was warm and gracious, kind, jovial and spirited, and everyone's friend. I was fortunate to be his lakeside neighbor for 20 years or more and could not have hoped for a better neighbor than Heinz. A fixture on Gravel Lake for more than 47 years who worked hard to be certain that his wife, Hertha, and their family could gather and create cherished memories so dear that his children and their own children continue to enjoy his legacy on the lake. To say that he will be sorely missed by his friends and family is an understatement. But I count myself amongst the fortunate to have called him my friend.

Bis wir uns wiedersehen, Heinz Gutmann. May you forever soar on eagles' wings.

Heinz Gutmann, August 27, 1930 – May 15, 2014

Carol DeSimone, Gebhard Beach

## Farewell to a Gravel Lake Friend

Marilyn White, from Gravel Lake, passed away on Wednesday, December 25, 2013. She and her husband Neil have owned property on Gravel Lake since 1984. They moved to Gravel Lake permanently from the Chicago area in the early 2000's. It was easy to see that Marilyn loved gardening as their house was planted with hundreds of bedding flowers each spring. She was also very creative and enjoyed decorative painting and quilting. She was interested in crafts of all kinds and had a room that was dedicated solely to crafting. Marilyn was also a member of the Quilt Guild in Lawton. She was adventurous, loving, smart, and always had a big smile on her face. Her husband, children, and grandchildren were first and foremost in her life. She will be deeply missed and warmly remembered by all who knew her.

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## Join the GLA Facebook Group!

Join the Gravel Lake Association Facebook group! It is an excellent way for us to connect with our fellow lakere. Important lake-related information is posted there frequently, including weed treatment dates, when the newsletter is available, event info, lost-and-found info, announcements, recommendations, and surveys where you can voice your opinion. People also post pictures from around the lake, even in the winter! Our goal for the end of the summer is 200 followers. Help us achieve our goal!

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## Treasurer's Report

**Beginning Balance as of 1/1/14 \$28,257.70**

### Deposits

January Interest	\$1.19
February Interest	\$1.16
March Interest	\$1.08
2014 Membership Dues - 8	\$616.00
2014 Membership Dues - 2	\$1,058.00
2014 Membership Dues - 2	\$92.00

**Total Deposits \$1,769.43**

### Expenses

The Michigan Riparian	\$540.00
Michigan Lakes and Stream Membership Dues	\$180.00
Michigan Waterfront Alliance	\$100.00
Sheri Kurtyak - Water Quality Testing Reimbursement	\$93.00

**Total Expenses \$913.00**

Checkbook Balance as of 4/13/14 \$27,682.35

### Other Assets:

Certificate of Deposit - Maturity Date 6/12/14	\$5,203.25
Certificate of Deposit - Maturity Date 6/12/14	\$5,203.25
Certificate of Deposit - Maturity Date 10/12/14	\$5,258.54

**Total Other Assets \$15,665.04**

**Total Funds \$43,347.39**





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## Purple Loosestrife



You've probably heard of purple loosestrife, as it has been mentioned in the Gravel Laker numerous times. So what is it, exactly? The purple loosestrife is a colorful addition to our lake vegetation, but it's not all beauty with this exotic perennial plant. The loosestrife can grow quite aggressively, becoming an invasive species. It produces up to 2.7 million seeds per year. This plant can grow from 6-10 feet tall and 4 feet wide. It produces 30-50 stems per plant, with purple-reddish petals at the top of each stalk. Soft hairs can be seen on the upper part of the plant. The purple loosestrife lives in areas that are wet, such as swamps, wetlands, roadsides, and lake shores. Its seeds germinate in water, but a moist environment usually works better to harbor the growing seedling, rather than a fully flooded area.

Because the loosestrife can so quickly multiply and take over, they can cause drastic changes to an ecosystem. The stems that are dense and stiff provide very little nutrition for animals, fish, and most insects. Though they are almost noncontributory to the circle of wetland life, they can take over an area with indirectly devastating effects. The rapid growth of the loosestrife will push beneficial plants to near extinction in their chosen sites. The reduction in other plants is troubling in itself, but without these food sources, animal populations will suffer, most notably waterfowl. Furthermore, due to the rapid overtaking of the shallow areas, breeding grounds for frogs, fish, toads and more can be compromised.

The state passed Act 189 in 1995, which forbade the sale and distribution of purple loosestrife. As with most invasive species, there are a number of ways to rid the environment of these plants, including chemicals or herbicides, hand-pulling, replacement with other more beneficial plants, and biological control. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, after "feeding trial" tests identified certain beetles to perform the most damage to the loosestrife, these biological control agents were released in North America to help decrease the population. *Galerucella*, a leaf-eating beetle can affect the growth of the loosestrife. *Hylobius transversovittatus* is a weevil that uses the stems of the loosestrife to lay its eggs. The larvae then feed on the nutrients in the root, thus starving the plant and denying its leaf development, stunting the plant from maturing. Yet another species is the nanophyes *marmoratus* which acts to decrease seed production in the plant. Biological controls have been extremely useful in reducing the population and over-colonization of the purple loosestrife.

The loosestrife is making an appearance in the Gravel Lake community, but it has yet to become invasive. It can be found in the shallows of the lake, along the shorelines of the channel, and along roadsides, especially along swampy areas. Though the purple loosestrife is a pretty and colorful addition to our lake, it has devastating potential. Hopefully we will not have to resort to drastic measures to control a growing population of this vegetation, but it is important to be aware of the issues this plant can cause. And remember, one of the most efficient ways to get rid of the loosestrife is to hand-pull it from the ground. Don't waste the beauty; try enjoying the loosestrife in a vase on your kitchen table!

Tricia Barker  
Contributing writer





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## Quinoa Veggie Salad

Even non-health nuts will love this crisp, refreshing salad on a hot summer day. You can modify the recipe to fit your personal tastes. I personally like to add kale for an extra nutritional boost! If you've never cooked with quinoa (pronounced KEEN-wah) before, I highly recommend it. It's both a starch and a source of protein! It is highly versatile and very easy to prepare and incorporate into meals.

### Ingredients:

#### For salad

4 cups cooked quinoa  
1 (15 oz. can) black olives, chopped  
2 cucumbers, peeled and chopped  
1 green bell pepper, chopped  
1 orange bell pepper, chopped  
½ red onion, chopped  
2 tomatoes, chopped

#### For dressing

¼ cup red wine vinegar  
2t salt  
1t ground black pepper  
4t Dijon mustard  
1t lemon juice  
1 cup extra virgin olive oil

### Directions:

1. Cook quinoa according to package directions. Refrigerate until cold, at least one hour.
2. Add the cucumbers, peppers, red onion, tomatoes, and olives to the cold quinoa.
3. Place the vinegar, salt, pepper, lemon juice, and mustard into a blender. Drizzle in the oil while blending at high speed until the dressing is thick. Pour the dressing over the salad and gently fold until evenly mixed.



### Notes:

- You can use either type of quinoa—the red or the white. I use the red because it is prettier! Just don't forget to rinse it before cooking to remove the bitter outer coating.
- I recommend using Roma tomatoes because they are hardier and won't fall apart when chopped.

## Summertime Word Find

f v e g s k f e r f r p h o p o w t k  
 d o a d a t y a i e a y u z t l a s i  
 b l u y a e r r m d d r f k k o r u d  
 f a a r l r e e d i e d f o b d e n s  
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 i i a d o h e p a t k y l b a a k i a  
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 a q j g n i h s i f n o w g e k i w e  
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 k o c h a n n e l p n b y d n a s u f

Fourth of July  
 America  
 red  
 white  
 blue  
 fireworks  
 flag  
 bald eagle  
 sparklers

Memorial Day  
 Gravel Lake  
 friends  
 family  
 beach  
 cottage  
 Regatta  
 Fun Run  
 Kids Games  
 Boat Parade  
 Picnic

kayak  
 canoe  
 paddleboat  
 skiing  
 tubing  
 paddleboard  
 wakeboard

Gebhard  
 Huff's Landing  
 Idle Ease  
 Dugan's Landing  
 Lewis  
 Sandy  
 Willow  
 Winkler  
 Streeter  
 Chamberlin  
 Channel

fishing  
 bluegill  
 panfish  
 walleye  
 sunfish

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### Call to Report Public Access Issues!

In an effort to keep our public access used for what it is supposed to be used for (launching boats), we encourage you to store this number for the DNR in your cell phone, and call when you see people camping out, having a bonfire, littering, or anything else that may harm our lake environment. Report these issues and the DNR can come out and ticket the offenders! The phone number is 1-800-292-7800.



## Sources

### Sources for Endangered Species of Van Buren County

- Endangered Species in Michigan: By County. Web. 12 Apr. 2014. <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/lists/michigan-cty.html>
- "Indiana Bat." USFWS: Fact Sheet. Web. 12 Apr. 2014. <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/index.html>
- "Northern Long-Eared Bat." USFWS: Fact Sheet. Web. 12 Apr. 2014. <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nlba/nlbaFactSheet.html>
- "White-nose Syndrome Confirmed in Bats in Michigan." DNR. Web. 12 Apr. 2014. [http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10371\\_10402-325890--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10371_10402-325890--,00.html)
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- "Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake." USFWS: Fact Sheet. Web. 12 Apr. 2014. <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/reptiles/eama/eama-fct-sht.html>
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- "Pitcher's Thistle." USFWS: Fact Sheet. Web. 12 Apr. 2014. <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/plants/pitchers.html>

### Sources for Purple Loosestrife

- <http://www.watershedcouncil.org/learn/aquatic%20invasive%20species/purple%20loosestrife/>
- [http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/57414/Palmer\\_SNREthesis.pdf?sequence=1](http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/57414/Palmer_SNREthesis.pdf?sequence=1)
- [http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/downloads/ais/fs-97-501\\_purple\\_loosestrife.pdf](http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/downloads/ais/fs-97-501_purple_loosestrife.pdf)

### Public Access Cleanup!

Help us clean up the public access! Chances are good that you didn't make the mess at the access, but we'd all like to see our lake free of litter. We're organizing clean-up days that will be announced via the Gravel Lake Association Facebook group. Details on dates and what you need to bring will go out in posts from the Facebook group as well as the Google groups email.

# Gravel Lake Association

## Membership Form: January 2014 - December 2014

Fill out and mail to:

Gravel Lake Association, P.O. Box 531, Lawton, MI 49065

This document is also available on the website @ [www.gravellake.org](http://www.gravellake.org).

Please print clearly.

Member name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Beach: \_\_\_\_\_ Lake Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Gravel Lake Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Lawton, MI 49065

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please print clearly. Mail Check or Money Order payable to Gravel Lake Association*

Membership dues for 2014 \$35.00

Optional Riparian magazine \$12.00

Additional donation \_\_\_\_\_

Fish Stocking Donation \$10.00 \$15.00 \$25.00 or Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate where your Riparian should be sent (circle one): home lake

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## Gravel Lake Association

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